

Conrad State 20/J-1 Visa Waiver Program

Program Objective:

The Conrad State 20/J-1 Visa Waiver Program assists in the recruitment and retention of physicians to serve communities that lack adequate access to primary health care. The Conrad State 20 J-1 Visa Waiver Program assists international medical graduates (physicians) in obtaining a H-1B or L-1 Visa in return for practicing medicine at a health care site that provides services to Utah's medically underserved populations.

Short Description and Background:

The Conrad State 20 J-1 Visa Waiver Program was created under the Immigration and Nationality Act, Title III, 22 CFR § 41.63. International medical graduates (physicians) who have entered the United States under a J-1 clinical training program are subject to a two year home residence obligation. These international medical graduates are obligated to either fulfill their two year home country requirement or obtain a waiver of that requirement as a prerequisite to obtain an H-1B or L-1 Visa, or permanent resident status. Utah health care sites that provide services to medically underserved populations must show that they have been unable to recruit an United States citizen or permanent resident to fill their physician vacancy for at least the past year.

Program Accomplishments:

Since 1994 the Bureau of Primary Care, Rural, and Ethnic Health, Utah Department of Health, has placed 21 primary care physicians in rural and 17 primary care physicians in urban health care sites that serve Utah's medically underserved populations. These physicians are required to complete a three year service obligation, with the hopes that they will remain and continue to serve medically underserved populations in Utah communities upon completion of their obligation.

Fiscal Implications:

Primary care services can best prevent illness, or detect and treat it early, when visits occur regularly over time. There are no fiscal implications for the Conrad State 20 J-1 Visa Waiver Program, as program activities are funded through the federally funded Primary Care Office, which is located within the Bureau of Primary Care, Rural, and Ethnic Health. The Conrad State 20 J-1 Visa Waiver Program would impact Utah's rural and medically underserved areas that have a hard time recruiting physicians, in which the J-1 Visa Waiver physicians are willing to work.

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